

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

All the Year Round

A Weekly Journal

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CROSS CURRENTS.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

Two days after the Sunday on which Helen, Humphrey, and Selma dined at the Cornishes', Mervyn Dallas was left alone at home with the prospect of a solitary fortnight, and Mrs. Cornish asked her to come and spend the time with them. Roger, whose business arrangements at that time were rather unsettled, was a good deal at home just then, and the ice having been so thoroughly broken between them, Selma's old lover and her enthusiastic little adorer found a constant bond of sympathy, and an unfailing topic for tête-à-tête conversations, in Selma's perfections.

The bitter and unpardonable animosity which had lurked in the tone of almost every one who had hitherto spoken or written to him of Selma—though any open expression of such a feeling to him had from the very first received a simple and decided check—had been a constant distress and reproach to Roger. That she should lose affection and respect for what he looked upon as entirely his own fault, hurt him almost as though he himself had actually done something to lower her in popular estimation. The bitter pain of his first disappointment was past for him now, although he hardly realised the fact; the element of reverent uncertainty which had been so prominent a characteristic of his love, had come to his help in his trouble, and he had grown, with

time, to look upon the girl he had lost as an altogether superior order of being, to be admired and worshipped as such, but to be thought of no longer with the simple, protecting love which such a man as Roger Cornish gives to his wife.

To hear her talked of as Mervyn talked of her, to be able to dwell on her beauty and her general perfection was, to him, like the restoration of his own self-respect. That the conversation which began with Selma should not invariably end with her, was not so wonderful as it seemed, on reflection, to Roger.

Mervyn's visit to the Cornishes was drawing to a close, when Helen, coming in one afternoon about tea-time, as she often did, found the whole party assembled in the drawing-room. Roger and Mervyn were both there, and, after a few minutes, a most unusual fit of silence and abstraction seemed to come over Helen, which lasted until she found herself in Sylvia's bedroom, whither the latter had conducted her to inspect something or other—Helen was not quite sure what. She was standing with the recent purchase in question—a hat—in her hand, looking at it vaguely, when she said, slowly:

"Sylvia, have you noticed anything?"
Sylvia looked at her quickly.

"What sort of thing, Helen?" she asked, looking down again at the hat, on which Helen's eyes were also fixed.

"Roger and—and Mervyn," said Helen. And then she and Sylvia looked up simultaneously, their eyes met, and the new hat was nearly demolished as they suddenly and vigorously embraced. "Oh, my dear!" cried Helen, joyfully. "Is it really, do you think? How long has it been going on? Oh, tell me all about it, do!"

"We all think so," returned Sylvia, eagerly, as though she were only too delighted to talk about it. "I don't believe they've any idea of it themselves, yet; it would take them ever so long to think of such a thing, you know. But wouldn't it be delightful?"

"Nothing could possibly be better," answered Helen. "Selma will never really forgive herself until he is married; and perhaps when there's no doubt as to his being quite—quite cured, you'll all forgive her, Sylvia?" she finished wistfully.

"We have—we have quite forgiven her," protested Sylvia; "if it is because she can't forgive herself that she hasn't been here since that Sunday, I think she ought to make an effort, Nell. Mother has spoken about it several times."

"She is so busy," said Helen, apologetically, not mentioning that she had several times made energetic, but entirely unsuccessful, attempts to get her sister to go with her to make the call on her aunt which mere civility required. "She is so very busy, Sylvia."

There was a moment's silence, and then Helen, returning to the topic from which they had gone off at a tangent, said:

"Oh, I shall be so anxious to hear how they get on, Sylvia—Mervyn and Roger, I mean. I suppose I'd better not say anything to Selma yet, in case—in case it should be a false hope."

"I wouldn't, certainly," returned Sylvia, promptly, thinking that Selma might very well wait. "I'm so glad you noticed it, Helen. I've been longing to talk to you about it. We are so pleased."

But the Cornishes' satisfaction was nothing to Helen's. It seemed to her that Roger's marriage was just the one thing that could and would put everything straight again, and lift the shadow of self-reproach from Selma's mind. That Selma suffered greatly from an exaggerated feeling of remorse and shame at her own conduct towards Roger, was the dominant principle in Helen's consideration of her sister at present, and had coloured all her impressions for many months. She would have hailed the news of his marriage to any one, almost, with joy, and she could hardly restrain herself from telling Selma of the probabilities that very evening. She contented herself, however, with mentioning that Mervyn was still with the Cornishes, and that Roger had still very little occupation, placing the two facts significantly near to one another; and

during the weeks that followed, as her hopes rose higher, and her satisfaction increased every day, she never came from the Cornishes' without having something to tell Selma in which the names of Mervyn and Roger occurred in close proximity.

Helen was anxious that her sister should call with her, because of what Sylvia had said and because Mrs. Cornish had several times hinted as to her non-appearance, and also because she wished her to have a chance of seeing with her own eyes what was likely to happen—as she might easily do any day at the Cornishes' house, where Mervyn was constantly to be found. But Selma was never able to go; all Helen's representations and arrangements for her were quietly put aside with a reference to her work.

Nobody who knew how her days were spent could have said that her words were an idle excuse. Tyrrell had arranged for the series of matinées for which she had begged—as an experiment, he announced—and though he altogether declined even to hear of more than one every fortnight, the amount of work which Selma contrived to get out of them was positively amazing to him. She rehearsed with him, and she rehearsed with the company as often as she could persuade him to call a rehearsal; and he knew that she must study hard at home to arrive in so short a time at the results she attained. She went into every minutest detail of dress which could possibly affect the correctness of the picture she was to make, with a feverish thoroughness.

Miss Tyrrell's lamentations over her were bitter and incessant. After her success as *Bianca*, invitations for all such "quiet" entertainments as were given in Lent showered upon her through that lady, and she refused them one and all. She was too busy, she said, to go out in the afternoon, and too tired after her day's work to go out in the evening.

"She has a chance for which any other girl would give ten years of her life," bewailed Miss Tyrrell, as she received one refusal after another. "And she is simply throwing herself away over this ridiculous mania for improvement. Of course, I know," she added, as Tyrrell's mouth took a cynical twist at this very plain speaking, "of course, I know that an artist must be devoted to her art; but still, I do not see why Selma should refuse the Duchess's dinner"—which was the immediate cause of Miss Tyrrell's outbreak. "She is absolutely overworking herself, too, John.

I thought her looking quite haggard the other day, and altogether strained and tired. She'll lose her beauty if she isn't careful, and then what will all this work do for her?"

John Tyrrell, to whom this harangue was addressed one morning at breakfast, made no attempt to reply to it. Selma was, in fact, something of a perplexity to him. He was well-used to what his sister defined as her "mania for improvement," but there was something about her manner of working lately which was new to him—something which he had once found himself defining as "desperate." The word, though he dismissed it the first time it occurred to him with a little contemptuous smile, came back to him again and again; and the more keenly and carefully he watched her, the less he understood her. It annoyed him, and it also annoyed him that, often as they met for purposes of rehearsal, Selma's whole mind was invariably concentrated on the matter in hand, and she neither heard nor understood him when he attempted to "waste the time," as she expressed it, in desultory, personal conversation.

It was a bright, warm, April day, nearly two months after the family dinner-party at Mrs. Cornish's, and into Selma's pretty sitting-room the soft spring air floated through the open window with a pleasant suggestion of country fields and flowers in its breath. But its gentle touch was unnoticed by Selma; she was walking up and down the room, her face flushed and tired-looking, and with a look in her eyes as though the concentration she was giving to the new part she was studying so indefatigably was a painful effort of will. She had been working for nearly two hours, and the flush on her cheeks was fading and leaving it very white, when there was a knock at the door, and the servant told her that Mr. Tyrrell was downstairs, and had asked to see her.

"The dining-room door was open, miss, and Mr. Tyrrell said he would go in there as he wanted to see you on business," added the girl, apologetically.

"Very well, thank you, Mary," said Selma, as she went quickly downstairs, wondering a little what the business could be that was so important. It was the first time Tyrrell had been to the house to see her.

"I hope there's nothing wrong, Mr. Tyrrell?" she began, nervously, as she entered the room.

Tyrrell was standing with his back to the door looking at a picture—a sketch of Selma which Humphrey had done long ago, and given to Helen. He turned quickly as she spoke, and came towards her.

"How do you do?" he said, quietly, as they shook hands. "Don't look so anxious, there is nothing wrong."

"I am getting nervous, I believe," she said, as she sat down, with a little laugh, which was somehow not quite natural. "I was afraid something might have happened—"

"To give you more work?" he interrupted, looking at her curiously.

"No, no, indeed," she protested, feverishly. "On the contrary, I was afraid something might have happened to postpone the next matinée."

He sat down close to her, and said, his voice very musical, with what seemed to Selma kindly solicitude:

"Selma, you are looking very tired. Am I overworking my 'leading lady'?"

"No!" she cried, vehemently, turning her face away from him, and pressing her hands against her pale cheeks as the colour flew to them. "I'm not tired—not in the least! And if I were, you know that it's only a necessary part of it. You said it was a struggle, and a constant effort! You said so!"

She faced him again as if defying him to notice the inconsistency of her words, and he understood at once that she was referring to the words he had once said to her about an artist's life—the life from which she had then been turning away.

"Did I?" he said, quietly. "I said then, at the same time perhaps, that the struggle brought its own reward! Do you find it so?"

She was still looking straight at him, but apparently she did not see him; at least, she was quite unconscious of his eyes. Her colour came and went, her lips set themselves, her eyes were dark and burning. At last, as though she forced it from herself, her answer came, vehement, almost passionate in its protestation.

"Yes!" she cried. "Yes, yes, yes!" Then apparently becoming conscious of herself, and her excitement, she rose abruptly, and going to the window, stood there, with her back towards him, looking out.

He did not speak to her. He was quite aware that he had had a glimpse at the real Selma, as she was at present, such as he

had not had for months, and he was more annoyed than ever with himself for not being able to understand what he had seen. He was still reflecting when she turned again with all the excitement gone from her face.

"I beg your pardon," she said, with a faint smile. "I'm afraid I've been gushing. There is something you want to talk about, isn't there?"

There was a good deal about which Tyrrell wanted to talk—about which he had wanted to talk for some time; but, above all things, he despised a man who risked a hair's breadth for want of patience, and he said :

"Yes, I came to tell you that Arnold will design your dresses for Pauline if you have settled nothing about them yet. He must have an answer to-night"—Tyrrell did not mention that the obligation was of his own making—"so I thought I had better see you this afternoon."

"How kind of you," said Selma, gratefully. "Don't think me very ungrateful if I say that my brother-in-law is doing them for me, and I won't trouble Mr. Arnold. He is very kind, but it seems to me that he hasn't much idea of character. I'm afraid, though," she added, hesitatingly, and with that deference in her tone with which she always considered a proposition of his, "I'm afraid you would have liked him to do them as you've taken all this trouble about it?"

"I don't care in the least," he replied, with a slight smile. "Your brother-in-law's designs are always excellent."

"Come up and see them, and have some tea," she said. "Humphrey is taking a little holiday, and he will be delighted to see you, and so will Helen. They are both in the studio."

She had risen as she spoke; but he did not follow her example immediately. He sat looking up at her as she stood in the fading sunlight of the April afternoon.

"I came to see you," he said.

"But you are not in a hurry? Oh, do come!"

"I want to talk to you, Selma."

Her face changed instantly.

"Oh, I beg your pardon!" she said. "I did not know there was anything else. What is it?"

He looked at her for another instant, and then he rose, abruptly.

"I dare say it will keep," he said. "I shall be delighted to go upstairs. Oh, by-the-way," he went on, "my sister sent you

this, and said you were to send an answer. She also said that she would not write to you, as she left it to your common-sense to decide. I suppose, however, that your common-sense and hers are likely to decide differently."

His smile as he spoke was not a pleasant one. He knew better than to hurry Selma into a social position which she did not care to fill; but her steady refusal of the invitations she received annoyed him little less than it annoyed his sister.

"I—am I to send an answer by you?" asked Selma, looking up from the imposing card of invitation she had drawn from its envelope. "It's a fancy dress ball!"

"One of the biggest things of the season," he assented. "No, you'd better think about it and write."

And then, as she turned with a smile and a little shake of the head, he opened the door for her, and followed her upstairs.

"We hear that Humphrey's Academy picture is capitally hung," said Selma, as they went. "I hope—" she opened the studio door as she spoke, and stopped suddenly.

The next moment Mervyn Dallas, who was calling on Helen, had placed her cup of tea hastily upon the table, and had rushed across the room in her most impulsive way, and was embracing Selma, unobtrusively, but with something almost tremulous in her vehemence, while Helen and Humphrey shook hands with Tyrrell.

"You dearest dear," she said, not the less enthusiastically because the presence of Tyrrell, who was almost a stranger to her, caused her to utter the words in a vehement whisper. Then, releasing Selma, she said, shyly: "How do you do, Mr. Tyrrell?" And as he, having shaken hands with her with the faintest possible smile of amusement, followed Helen to the tea-table, she turned to Selma once more, and gave her another furtive little hug. "I thought I was never going to see you again," she went on. "Are you always going to be so busy? I've been here ever so many times, and they've always told me that you were at work, or at rehearsal, or busy about a dress or something. Do you know I haven't seen you since—since"—Mervyn faltered, stopped, and crimsoned. She and Selma had not met since the Sunday dinner at Mrs. Cornish's.

But Selma did not colour. Perhaps it was the pale gravity of her face and the

curious quiet of her manner that gave Mervyn's eyes, as she looked at her, a slightly deprecating and wistful expression.

"I am very busy," answered Selma, simply. "Have you been here long, Mervyn?"

Mervyn made no reply. Her expressive little face was raised to speak when all at once it changed suddenly and completely. She was facing the door to which Selma's back was turned, and she had seen Roger Cornish come into the room.

"I thought I might come up," he said, apologetically, as he shook hands with Helen, who, having given Tyrrell the cup of tea she had been pouring for him, had come forward with a smile to meet her brother-in-law. "I didn't know—"

He broke off, not liking to say that he had not expected to find any one beside themselves. He shook hands with Selma, and then he turned to Mervyn, and there was something in his look and manner as he did so, something in the eyes she lifted for a moment to his face, which made Helen glance triumphantly at her sister as she stood next to Mervyn, with a delighted conviction that the moment for which she had waited so impatiently had come at last. It was quite a disappointment to her to see that Selma had turned and moved suddenly away to where Humphrey and Tyrrell were standing talking together—a strikingly contrasted pair.

"I don't believe she saw," thought Helen.

There was a curious mutual interest and liking between Humphrey Cornish and John Tyrrell, utterly at variance as were their schemes and ideals of life. Each man was conscious that there was more in the other than was easily to be fathomed; Humphrey believed that the best of John Tyrrell had never been drawn out, and Tyrrell liked and respected the quiet painter without troubling himself to define the reason. They met seldom enough, but when they did meet, they had always plenty to say to one another; and as Selma joined them now, Humphrey, who was speaking, did not break off, though his smile included her instantly in the conversation. It was Selma who interrupted him, abruptly:

"Humphrey," she said, "Mr. Tyrrell would like to see the Pauline sketches."

At the first sound of her voice, high-pitched, and almost harsh, though not

loud, both men turned simultaneously to look at her. Then Humphrey glanced quickly from her face to where Roger and Mervyn still stood together, dilating to one another on the extraordinarily accidental character of their meeting, and saying, quietly:

"With pleasure, Selma. They are on this table," led the way to the other end of the room

"What a capital studio you have here," observed Tyrrell, as he followed him with Selma.

John Tyrrell had come to the house that afternoon determined, if possible, to get some clue to the indescribable change which he had noticed in Selma. He had only seen Roger Cornish once—on the October afternoon when he had gone to Selma with her release from her first professional engagement, and she had proudly introduced him to the man she was to marry—but he had known "the colonial fellow" again the instant he had appeared in the doorway, though until that moment he had had no idea that he was in London. The sight of her old lover, and the strange ring in her voice as she spoke to Humphrey, taken in combination, had not only given him—as it seemed to him—the clue he wanted, but had let in a flood of light upon the position, of which he himself, John Tyrrell, was, in his own calculations, the centre figure. It was a light which not only roused all his intellectual faculties, but which stimulated, as they were not often stimulated now, all the calculating impulses into which he had subdued his passions; but as he uttered his complimentary comment on the studio, and strolled with Selma across the room, it would have been impossible to tell that anything in the least unusual was passing in his mind.

Humphrey silently produced the sketches, and Selma talked about them, describing the material and the colouring she proposed to use, rapidly, and rather incoherently, answered now and then by an appreciative word or two from Tyrrell. Humphrey had not spoken, and had hardly looked up from the sketches, when Helen, from the other end of the room, said:

"Humphrey, will you come here for a moment and tell Roger something?"

As he left them, with a word of excuse, silence fell upon Selma and Tyrrell. Selma, standing in shadow, was looking at the little group near the tea-table where Humphrey had joined, not Roger, but

Helen. Tyrrell looked at her for a moment, and then followed the direction of her eyes. He saw Roger with Mervyn's tea-cup in his hand, his face towards them ; he saw him bend down and give it her, and then, sitting down in the chair next her, lean forward and speak to her—the words themselves were lost in the words which were passing between Helen and Humphrey ; but Roger's face, as he spoke, was plainly visible. Then Tyrrell turned and looked again at Selma ; and, as he saw the expression on her face, his own grew resolute and determined. His mouth set itself for a moment like iron, and there was a most unusual flash in his eyes.

"The sketches are excellent," he said, lightly, turning away from her, and taking one in his hand again. "If you could make up your mind to that ball, now, either of these would be perfect."

She started at the sound of his voice, and looked round hurriedly as if to see if he had been looking at her. Then, as though she had hardly heard what he said, she answered vaguely, and as if only anxious to make conversation of any kind.

"The ball? Oh yes, the fancy ball. Tell me all about it, Mr. Tyrrell. I've never seen one."

"Then it would amuse you," he said, carelessly. "It is a pretty sight, and this will be magnificent. Lady Winslow always does things well."

"She is very handsome, isn't she?" said Selma, in a tone of the deepest interest, as she moved her chair a little so that she no longer saw the group by the tea-table.

"Well, no," returned Tyrrell, deliberately. "You must be thinking of some one else. Lady Winslow is the ugliest woman in London."

The conversation which followed would have filled Miss Tyrrell with a hope that light was dawning on Selma at last. She kept up the conversation then started on countesses and balls with a feverish eagerness and excitement, putting all kinds of questions on such subjects to Tyrrell whenever the talk seemed in danger of flagging. She was so deeply absorbed that Helen called her twice unheeded, and then came and put her hand on her shoulder.

"I'm so sorry to interrupt you, dear, she said. "I know how anxious you are about the Pauline dresses, but Mervyn is going."

Roger was going, too, it appeared, and Mervyn's eyes, as she said good-bye to

Selma, were even more deprecating than when she kissed her first.

A few minutes after Tyrrell also said good-bye.

"By-the-bye," he said to Selma, as he took leave, "Sybilla tells me that you don't mean to come to us on the second?"

Selma shook her head with a faint smile. The occasion in question was Miss Tyrrell's first large "at home" of the season.

"I shall have Pauline so much on my mind," she said.

"I am sorry!" he answered, gravely, and then he shook hands with Helen and Humphrey, and went away, and, as soon as he was gone, Selma, saying that she had a great deal to do before dinner, ran quickly upstairs.

As the door closed behind her, and Helen and Humphrey were left alone together, the former turned a radiant face towards her husband.

"I wonder whether she noticed," she cried. "I thought she looked rather odd and excited when she kissed Mervyn. Well, at any rate," with a happy little laugh, "I should think she would soon know now. Wasn't it delightful that they should meet here like that? Oh, poor dear, how pleased she will be!"

Humphrey was putting his sketches together with a rather grave and preoccupied air.

"I wonder!" he said, apparently in answer to his wife's first words. "I wonder!"

During the next two or three days that same grave, preoccupied air returned to Humphrey again and again, and Helen thought he must be meditating a new picture. To facilitate his meditations she left him as much as possible alone, expecting each evening that, as she sat with him while he smoked, he would deliver himself, according to his custom, first of a few slow words—few and far between—which should gradually grow under her very womanly and loving, if somewhat incomprehending, sympathy to a full description of the picture which was growing in his mind ; a description which he usually seemed to put into words as much for his own sake as for hers. But no such words came from him during these days, though, when Helen left him alone, he would sit meditatively smoking, or walking up and down with a troubled face.

It was late in the afternoon, four days after, and Helen herself was out. Humphrey, alone in the studio, had been standing in the same reflective attitude for very many minutes, when he was roused by the sudden opening of the door, and Roger came in quickly.

"I'm afraid I ought not to bang in like this," he said. "But if you're not too busy, old fellow, I should like to talk to you a bit."

A curious look, as of a man who has taken a sudden and rather desperate resolution, and intends to carry it immediately into action, had come over Humphrey's face at the sight of his brother, and it intensified at Roger's words.

"Sit down, old boy," he said. "I've been wanting a talk, too."

Roger paused in the act of settling himself in his chair, and looked at him.

"You have?" he said. "Well, go ahead then. Or wait a bit," he added. "Suppose I have my say first? It's rather on my mind."

"Go on, then."

But Roger did not go on. He leaned forward in his chair, propped his chin on his hands, and his elbows on his knees, and sat staring into the fire.

"Humphrey, old boy," he began, at last, in a low voice, "there's no one knows so well as you do how hard I was hit."

Humphrey started, and looked down at him, his face full of sympathy and hope.

"Yes," he said.

"I shall think of her as long as I live, as—as—well as altogether different to any other woman," Roger went on, slowly; "like a queen, or—or a saint, or something like that. But I'm only a man, you see; and a man wants—wants something nearer to him for his wife I've come to understand." He paused, and Humphrey's face changed suddenly; he turned it away without speaking, and, after a moment, Roger went on:

"I told her just how it was, and she understands exactly. I—she—we—" He paused again, having confused himself past all extrication, and Humphrey said, without looking at him:

"You are not talking of Selma, now. Tell me in so many words what you mean."

"I am engaged to Mervyn Dallas," answered Roger.

He never knew what it was that

Humphrey had been going to say to him. When he asked on a sudden thought as he said good-bye, Humphrey had forgotten.

CONCERNING SOME GEORGIAN DINNERS.

As introductory to my notes on some remarkable dinners in the reign of George the Third, I shall quote, from "Humphrey Clinker," Matthew Bramble's letters to Dr. Lewis, in which Smollett describes, with evident enjoyment, the wholesome fare at the command of a country gentleman of the period. The squire of Brambleton Hall is made to boast of his "five-year-old mutton, fed on the fragrant herbage of the mountains, that might vie with venison in juice and flavour;" "the delicious veal that fills the dish with gravy;" the barndoors fowls "that never knew confinement but when at roost;" "rabbits panting from the warren;" "trout and salmon struggling from the streams;" "salads, roots, and pot-herbs, the produce of his own garden." His orchard supplies his dessert; his dairy yields "nectareous tides of milk and cream, whence he derives abundance of excellent butter, curds, and cheese;" and the refuse fattens his pigs, which are destined for hams and bacon. His beverages are cider, brewed from his own apples; and claret, imported by a friend on whose integrity he can rely. While his bread, sweet and nourishing, is made from his own wheat, ground in his own mill, and baked in his own oven. Let the country gentleman of to-day look upon this picture—and weep.

This same Matthew Bramble is of opinion that no nation drinks so "hoggishly" as the English. "What passes for wine among us is not the juice of the grape. It is an adulterous mixture, brewed up of nauseous ingredients by dunces who are bunglers in the art of poison-making; yet we and our forefathers are, and have been, poisoned by this cursed drink, without taste or flavour. The only genuine and wholesome beverage in England is London porter and Dorchester table-beer; but as for your ale and your gin, your cider and your perry, and all the trashy family of made wines, I detest them as infernal compositions, contrived for the destruction of the human species." There is a good deal of truth in this, so far as home-made beverages are concerned, but I would fain

except from the sweeping censure Mrs. Primrose's gooseberry wine.

Smollett introduces into his pages the well-known actor and gastronome, James Quin. At a dinner given by Miss Tabitha Bramble, he characteristically exclaims : "If I was an absolute prince, at this instant, I believe I should send for the head of your cook in a charger. She has committed felony on the person of that John Dory, which is mangled in a cruel manner, and even presented without sauce."

Quin used to journey to Exeter in order to enjoy his favourite fish in perfection, the finest being caught on the west coast. One morning after his arrival, his valet came to call him according to custom.

"Well, John, any dory in the market?"

"No, sir."

"Very well; then I'll lay in bed to-day. Call me this time to-morrow."

When Dr. Robertson, the Scottish divine and historian, visited London, Smollett invited him to join a partie quarrée of ingenuous Scots. He accepted the invitation. The dinner was good, the talk was brilliant. "Having to stay all night," says one of the guests, "that we might spend the evening together, Smollett begged leave to withdraw for an hour, that he might give audience to his myrmidons; we insisted that if his business permitted, it should be in the room where we sat. The doctor agreed, and the authors"—his literary drudges or hacks—"were introduced to the number of five, I think; most of them were soon dismissed. He kept two, however, to supper, whispering to us that he believed they would amuse us, which they certainly did, for they were curious characters. We passed a very pleasant and joyful evening. When we broke up, Robertson expressed great surprise at Smollett's polished and agreeable manners, and the great urbanity of his conversation."

The dignified leader of the Scottish kirk, who infused a good deal of his dignity into his historical style, had evidently imagined that Smollett must be "the man he drew"—as coarse and wayward as the disreputable heroes of his novels.

Smollett, in 1752, took Monmouth House, in Lawrence Street, and here every Sunday he gave an authors' dinner, entertaining his less fortunate brethren of the quill with beef, pudding, and potatoes, port, punch, and Culvert's entire butt beer. A very humorous description of the guests occurs in "Humphrey Clinker."

Fielding, that great painter of manners, loved a good dinner when he could get one, which, in his earlier career, was by no means a daily certainty. Like his own Captain Booth, he was frequently induced to sponge upon his friends for it, or for a guinea with which to pay the tavern-keeper. He was over-partial to good-fellowship, which, in that roysterer age, implied a good deal of drinking, and, though a fond and faithful husband, tippled at the tavern, and paid the score with the money his poor wife had raised on her ornaments or her children's toys, keeping late hours, and thereby spoiling the modest dinner of boiled mutton she had cooked for him with her own tender hands.

An anecdote is related of him which shows the man better than would a hundred pages of analysis: He was living in Beaufort Buildings; his "parochial taxes" were over-due, and had been demanded by the collector with emphatic persistency. At last Fielding went off to Johnson, and, by "process of literary mortgage," procured the needful sum. He was returning with it, when he met an old college chum whom he had not met for several years, and immediately asked him to dine with him at a neighbouring tavern. He found his friend to be involved in great difficulties; and with his usual generous promptitude emptied into his pocket the limited contents of his replenished purse. On his return home he was told that the collector had called twice for his money. "Friendship," said Fielding, "has called for it, and had it; let the collector call again."

In his novels, Fielding seldom dines his characters on anything more sumptuous than a chine of beef or a loin of mutton, with an occasional chicken or two, though he sets them down at the table with greater frequency than almost any other novelist I know of. It would be interesting to count how many dinners and suppers, to say nothing of breakfasts, take place in the course of "Tom Jones"; I believe the reader would be surprised at the total. One of the happiest of his descriptions I take to be that, in "Amelia," of the dinner prepared by Mrs. Booth, to which her husband brings an unexpected guest.

"Amelia," he says, "with the assistance of a little girl, who was their only servant, had dressed her dinner, and she had likewise dressed herself as neat as any lady

who had a regular set of servants could have done, when Booth returned, and brought with him his friend, James, whom he had met with in the Park ; and who, as Booth absolutely refused to dine away from his wife, to whom he promised to return, had invited himself to dine with him. Amelia had none of that paltry pride which possesses so many of her sex, which disconcerts their tempers, and gives them the airs and looks of furies if their husband brings in an unexpected guest without giving them timely warning to provide a sacrifice to their own vanity. Amelia received her husband's friend with the utmost complaisance and good-humour ; she made, indeed, some apology for the homeliness of her dinner ; but it was politely turned as a compliment to Mr. James's friendship, which could carry him where he was so sure of being so ill entertained, and gave not the least hint how magnificently she would have provided had she expected the favour of so much good company—a phrase which is generally meant to contain not only an apology for the lady of the house, but a tacit satire on her guests for their intrusion, and is at least a strong insinuation that they are not welcome."

This is a lesson in true politeness which many hostesses would do well to take to heart.

Our Georgian ancestors were certainly of coarse appetites. You can see, in some of Hogarth's broadly-painted satires, indications of the excess to which every class was more or less addicted. Hogarth, himself, preferred a dinner of roast beef and pudding to the daintiest dishes devised by the genius of, let me say, Le Stere, the Duke of Bedford's notable cook. When he and four jolly companions undertook their famous excursion "from London to the Island of Sheppey," extending over five days of adventure, they displayed in their meals a distinct inclination for solidity and substance in preference to the grace and lightness of a refined cuisine. One day they dined upon "hung beef and biscuit," washing down the indigestible viands with Hollands ; another day on "soles and flounders, with crab sauce ; calf's head stuffed and roasted, with the liver fried, and appurtenance minced ; and roast leg of mutton, and green peas." Their beverages were small beer and port ! It was with food as heavy, and liquors as strong that Sir Robert Walpole had entertained his Norfolk squires at Houghton.

One of the clauses of the hospitable code of the time was that every guest must be fed to repletion, and liquored into intoxication ; and a man's répute for good fellowship depended upon the readiness with which he conformed to this clause.

Beef, and veal, and pork—such being the principal joints that figured at the dinner-table of the English squire, one is the more surprised that on the lady of the house should be imposed the onerous work of carving. Yet as Lady Louisa Stuart reminds us, in her charming memoir of her grandmother, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, the mistress of a country house was then expected, not only to persuade and provoke her guests to eat voraciously, but to carve every dish, when chosen, with her own fair hands. The higher her rank, the more indispensable was this laborious duty. Each joint was placed before her in turn, to be operated upon by her, and her alone. The lords and squires on either hand proffered no assistance. The master of the house, seated opposite to her, might not act as her croupier, his special function being to pass the bottle after dinner. As for the crowd of guests who sat below the salt, the most incon siderable among them, the squire's younger brother, the chaplain who mumbled prayers and took the vacant hand at whist, the curate in rusty cassock from the neighbouring village, or the subaltern from the nearest military station, if suffered through her neglect to help himself to a slice of the mutton that steamed at his end of the board, would have digested it as an affront, and gone home in dudgeon, half inclined to vote the wrong way at the next election. There were then professional carving-masters, who taught young ladies the art scientifically, and from one of these Lady Mary received instruction thrice a week, so as to be perfect on her father's public days at Thoresby. On those occasions, that she might discharge her duties without let or hindrance, she was compelled to eat her own dinner alone an hour or two beforehand. How she would have welcomed the modern invention of dinners à la Russe !

If Lady Mary had but kept a record of her dinners, how thankful one would have been ! She must have dined with all the most distinguished of her contemporaries ; she must have tested the skill of the best cooks of her day. Bishops, peers, poets, essayists, beaux, wits, and would-be wits, actors, authors, fine ladies—she dined with

them all! Lord Halifax, Lord Sandwich, Lord Hervey, Lord Carlisle, Pope, of course, and Pope's circle—the Earl of Mansfield, Duchess Sarah of Marlborough, Congreve the dramatist, Henry Fielding, the poet Gay, Dr. Garth, Churchill the satirist—these are but a few of the celebrities with whom she dined, or who dined with her. When she lived at Saville House, Twickenham, her table was crowded with notable guests; and she was too experienced a woman of the world not to provide them with something more substantial than "the feast of reason." Abroad, she carried her hospitality with her. Writing to her daughter from Brescia, she says:

"I had a visit in the holidays of thirty horse of ladies and gentlemen, with their servants—by the way, the ladies all ride like the late Duchess of Cleveland—i.e., in masculine fashion. They came with the kind intent of staying with me at least a fortnight, though I had never seen any of them before; but they were all neighbours within ten miles round. I could not avoid entertaining them, and by good luck had a large quantity of game in the house, which, with the help of my poultry, furnished out a plentiful table. I sent for the fiddles, and they were so obliging as to dance all night, and even dine with me the next day."

Of Italian cookery, of French cookery, of Austrian cookery, of German cookery, Lady Mary must have gained an extensive knowledge. Alas! why did she not bequeath to posterity the results of her wide and varied research?

The fastidious and refined Gray would, without doubt, have carried his exquisite taste into the arrangement of his table and the choice of his viands; but hereditary gout imposed upon him the obligation of a rigid abstemiousness. There is a curious passage in one of Horace Walpole's letters, in which he says: "My Lady Ailesbury has been much diverted, and so will you, too. Gray is in their neighbourhood. My Lady Carlisle says, he is extremely like me in his manner. They went a party to dine on a cold loaf, and passed the day." "A cold loaf" would seem but a sorry dish to set before one's friends! Walpole speaks of him as very ill company at the dinner-table. "From a melancholy turn, from living reclusely, and from a little too much dignity, he never converses easily; all his words are measured, and chosen, and

formed into sentences." His last, and fatal, illness seized him while he was at dinner in the college hall of Pembroke, and he died six days afterwards, July the thirtieth, 1771.

To the author of "*Tristram Shandy*" and "*A Sentimental Journey*," that most irreverent of reverends, Laurence Sterne, when he came up from his Yorkshire vicarage to sun himself in the success of his great book, Garrick proved a generous friend. "Mr. Garrick," he writes, "pays me all and more honour than I could look for. I dined with him to-day, and he has promised numbers of great people to carry me to dine w^th 'em . . . He leaves nothing undone that can do me either service or credit; he has undertaken the management of the booksellers, and will procure me a great price." Sterne's sojourn in London was a glorious cycle of dinners; and he had enough of the gastronome in him to appreciate the seductions of a well-furnished table. Gray writes: "'*Tristram Shandy*' is still a great object of admiration—the man as well as the book; one is invited to dinner, where he dines, a fortnight before." And when some one remarked, in Johnson's hearing, that there was little hospitality in London, Johnson confuted him by a reference to Sterne, who, he said, "has had engagements for three months."

One of the most interesting of Sterne's dinners was that given by Lord Bathurst. "You know," he writes to Mrs. Draper, "this nobleman was always the protector of men of wit and genius, and has had those of the last century, Addison, Steele, Swift, Pope, Prior, etc., always at his table. The manner in which his notice began of me was as singular as it was polite. He came up to me one day as I was at the Princess of Wales's Court, and said, 'I want to know you, Mr. Sterne; but it is fit you also should know who it is that wishes this pleasure. You have heard of an old Lord Bathurst, of whom your Popes and Swifts have sung and spoken so much? I have lived my life with geniuses of that cast, but have survived them; and, despairing ever to find their equals, it is some years since I have shut up my books and closed my accounts; but you have kindled a desire in me of opening them once more before I die; which I now do. So go home and dine with me.'"

One of Sterne's early friends—and perhaps the least respectable—was John Hall

Stevenson, the author of "Crazy Tales," who, at Skelton Castle, near Sutton-in-the-Forest, loved to assemble a company of kindred spirits—self-styled "The Demoniacs"—and to engage with them in reputed orgies of hard drinking and foul talking. As Mr. Traill says, the club may have had nothing diabolical about it except the name; but as Stevenson had been a comrade of John Wilkes, and his brother-monks of Medmenham, and as the fraternity included gay militaires like Colonels Hall and Lee, and "fast" parsons like the Rev. "Panky" Lascelles—mock grandson of Pantagruel—Sterne, as the Vicar of Sutton, could not attend their banquet without injury to his reputation.

That was a strange dinner which took place at the table of the British Ambassador, Lord Hertford, in his splendid hotel in Paris. Sterne, who was in Paris on a visit, was asked to preach the first sermon in its chapel, and took for his text, by some mischance, 2 Kings xx. 15. At the dinner which followed, David Hume was present, and he, not unintentionally, rallied Sterne on his choice of a text. "David," writes Sterne, "was disposed to make a little merry with the parson, and, in return, the parson was equally disposed to make a little merry with the infidel. We laughed at one another, and the company laughed at us both." The picture Sterne draws is hardly a very edifying one.

When rusticating for health's sake in his Coxwold vicarage, towards the close of his strange career, his dinners were of the simplest. "I am as happy as a Prince," he writes to a friend, "and I wish you could see in how princely a manner I live. 'Tis a land of plenty. I sit down alone to dinner—fish and wild-fowl, or a couple of fowls or ducks, with dessert and all the simple plenty which a rich valley under Hamilton Hills can produce, with a clean cloth on my table, and a bottle of wine on my right hand to drink your health."

In connection with Sterne one can never help thinking of the dinner-party in Clifford Street—close to Sterne's last lodgings in Bond Street—on March the eighteenth, 1768. The company were friends of Sterne, and a footman was sent to ask after his health. "I went," said the footman, afterwards; "the mistress opened the door; I enquired how he did; she told me to go up to the room. I went into the room, and he was just a-dying.

I waited ten minutes, and in five, he said, 'Now it has come.' He put up his hands, as if to stop a blow, and died in a minute."

A year or two before Sterne's first appearance on the town, a young officer of the name of Wolfe, who had earned distinction by his military services in Europe and America, was appointed by Pitt to the command of an expedition against Quebec; and on the day preceding his embarkation, was invited to dine with the great minister to receive his final instructions. The only other guest was Earl Temple. As the evening advanced, Wolfe, it is said, heated perhaps by his own inspiring thoughts, and the unwonted society of statesmen, indulged in a wild, gasconading strain; drew his sword, smote the table with it, flourished it round the room, and boasted of the mighty things he intended to achieve. The two ministers sat aghast at an exhibition so unusual from any man of real sense and real spirit; and when at last Wolfe had taken his leave, and his carriage was heard to roll from the door, Pitt seemed for a moment shaken in the high opinion which his deliberate judgement had formed of Wolfe. He lifted up his eyes and arms, and exclaimed to Lord Temple:

"Good God! that I should have entrusted the fate of the country and of the administration to such hands!"

This anecdote is told on the authority of Mr. Grenville, who professed to have heard it from Lord Temple. But it is not in keeping with what we know of Wolfe's character, and betrays marks of exaggeration or misconception. At all events, the hero justified Pitt's original judgment by his victory and death on the Heights of Abraham.

At his pinchbeck Gothic castle of Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole played the host to perfection. His own character as a wit, scholar, and fine gentleman, and the celebrity which his "fantastic fabric" had acquired for its architectural novelties and internal treasures, drew thither visitors of every class—lords and ladies, dukes and duchesses, poets and princes, men of fashion and men of letters, besides "distinguished foreigners"—and he knew how to entertain them according to their several humours. I should like to dwell upon the social glories of Strawberry Hill, and to pick up reminiscences of the men and women who once sauntered through its gallery, loitered among the treasures of

its library and green closet, or idled in its round drawing-room ; but I must be content with a glance at one of the brilliant dinner-parties which the courteous Horace assembled in its refectory, which, by the way, was "hung with paper in imitation of stucco," and adorned with a conversation piece by Reynolds, and portraits of Walpole's father, family, and friends.

Writing to George Montagu — May the eleventh, 1769—he says :

" Last Tuesday all France dined here ; Monsieur and Madame Châtelet, the Duc de Liancourt, three more French ladies, eight other Frenchmen, the Spanish and Portuguese Ministers, the Holdernesses, Fitzroys—in short, we were five-and-twenty. They arrived at two. At the gates of the Castle I received them, drest in the cravat of Gibbon's carving, and a pair of gloves, embroidered up to the elbows, that belonged to James the First. The French servants stared, and firmly believed this was the dress of English country gentlemen. After taking a survey of the apartments, we went to the printing-house, where I had prepared verses, with translations by Monsieur de Lille, one of the company. The moment they were printed off, I gave a private signal, and French horns and clarinets accompanied this compliment. We then went to see Pope's grotto and garden, and returned to a magnificent dinner in the refectory. In the evening we walked ; had tea, coffee, and lemonade in the gallery, which was illuminated with a thousand or thirty candles, I forget which, and played at whist and loo till midnight. Then there was a cold supper, and at one the company returned to town, saluted by fifty nightingales, who, as tenants of the manor, came to do honour to their lord."

Of Dr. Johnson's dining-out propensities and his peculiar gastronomic tastes so much has been said, that, in alluding to them, I am under the disadvantage of repeating an oft-told tale. When he first came to London, his means were of the smallest, and a rigid economy was imposed upon him.

" I dined very well," he says, " for eightpence, with very good company at the 'Pine-Apple,' in New Street ; several of them had travelled ; they expected to meet every day, but did not know one another's names. It used to cost the rest a shilling, for they drank wine ; but I had a cut of meat for sixpence, and bread for

a penny, and gave the waiter a penny ; so that I was quite well-served, nay, better than the rest, for they gave the waiter nothing."

He rose above such meagre fare as this when his literary reputation was established ; but seldom had occasion to dine at home. When he was not at one of his favourite clubs, he dined with Reynolds, or Goldsmith, or Bennet Langton—that is, when he was not sheltered under the hospitable roof of the Thrales, at Streatham Park. Nothing, as Boswell acutely remarks, could have been more fortunate for Johnson than this connection. " He had at Mr. Thrale's all the comforts and even luxuries of life ; his melancholy was diverted, and his irregular habits lessened by association with an agreeable and well-ordered family. He was treated with the utmost respect, and even affection. The vivacity of Mrs. Thrale's literary talk roused him to cheerfulness and exertion, even when they were alone. But this was not often the case ; for he found here a constant succession of what gave him the highest enjoyment—the society of the learned, the witty, and eminent in every way, who were assembled in numerous companies—called forth his wonderful powers, and gratified him with admiration, to which no man could be insensible.

I string together a few anecdotes of Johnson and his dinners. One evening his servant brought him a message : " Sir V. Taylor sends his compliments to you, and begs you will dine with him to-morrow. He has got a hare."

" My compliments," replied Johnson, " and I'll dine with him—hare or rabbit."

On a certain Easter-day, he asked Boswell to dine with him.

" I never supposed," says Boswell, " that he had a dinner at his house, for I never heard of his friends having been entertained at his table. He told me, ' I generally have a meat-pie on a Sunday ; it is baked at a public oven, which is properly allowed, because one man can attend to it ; and thus the advantage is obtained of not keeping servants from church to address dinner.' " Boswell continues : " I had gratified my curiosity much in dining with Jean Jacques Rousseau while he lived in the wilds of Neufchâtel. I had as great a curiosity to dine with Dr. Samuel Johnson in the dusty recess of a court in Fleet Street. I supposed we should scarcely have knives and forks, and only some strange, uncouth, ill-drest dish ; but

I found everything in very good order. As a dinner here was considered as a singular phenomenon, and as I was frequently interrogated on the subject, my readers may perhaps be desirous to know our bill of fare. Foote, I remember, in allusion to Francis the negro—Johnson's servant—was willing to suppose that our repast was black broth. But the fact was that we had a very good soup, a boiled leg of lamb and spinach, a veal-pie, and a rice-pudding."

One day Johnson dines at Sir Alexander Macdonald's, when his attention is drawn to a young officer in the regiments of the Scots loyal by the vivacity and fluency of his conversation. He is the Hon. Thomas Erskine, who afterwards abandoned military service, and took up with the legal profession, obtaining fame and fortune as counsel learned in the law, and attaining to the woolsack.

Visiting Oxford, he and Boswell are invited to dinner by Dr. Bentham, Canon of Christ Church, and professor of divinity.

"Sir," said Johnson to Boswell, "it is a good thing to dine with the Canons of Christ Church."

And no doubt it was; but the two friends were unable to accept the invitation, having promised to dine at University College, where they had an excellent dinner with the Masters and Fellows.

Dining at an inn at Chapel House, he expatiated on the felicity of England in its taverns and inns, and triumphed over the French for not having, in every perfection, the tavern life. "There is no private house," said he, "in which people can enjoy themselves as well as at a capital tavern. Let there be ever so great plenty of good things, ever so much grandeur, ever so much elegance, ever so much desire that everybody should be easy, in the nature of things it cannot be; there must always be some degree of care and anxiety."

Johnson's peculiarities of manner—the result, in great measure, of physical disease—have been sufficiently commented upon. We all know that he tore his dinner like a famished wolf, with the veins on his forehead swelling, and the perspiration running down his cheeks; that he generally drank lemonade or water, but that when he took wine, he took it in large quantities, and greedily. I find no pleasure in dwelling upon these details. I prefer to think of him, as Macaulay pictures him, in his favourite club-room, with the

table which bears his lemons, and the omelette for Nugent, and around him those men of light and leading whose features still live upon the canvas of Reynolds. "There are the spectacles of Burke; and the tall, thin form of Langton; the courtly sneer of Beauclerk, and the beaming smile of Garrick; Gibbon tapping his snuff-box; and Sir Joshua with his trumpet in his ear. In the foreground is that strange figure, which is as familiar to us as the figures of those among whom we have been brought up—the gigantic body, the large, massy face, seamed with the scars of disease, the brown coat, the black worsted stockings, the grey wig, with the scorched foretop, the dirty hands, the nails bitten and pared to the quick. We see the eyes and mouth moving with convulsive twitches; we see the heavy form rolling; we hear it puffing; and then comes the 'Why, sir!' and the 'What then, sir?' and the 'No, sir'; and the 'You don't see your way through the question, sir!'"

But how little should we know of Johnson if it were not for Boswell!

BY ELECTRIC LIGHT.

IF, in this age of Exhibitions, there be one branch of industry which has a better right than another to bring itself prominently into public notice, to call attention to its recent inventions and triumphs, and to a comparison between its latest perfections and its earliest attempts, it is the scientific industry of practical electricity, electro-technik, as the Germans have it. No other science has made such astounding strides within the last ten years; no professional man has a finer field open to him than the electric engineer. The mysterious force which, fifty years ago, was only known in a series of disconnected and apparently uncontrollable phenomena, has now been thoroughly investigated and domesticated, and made subservient to the needs of daily life in innumerable ways. In medicine and mechanics, in metallurgy and mining, electricity is becoming, or has already become, by the rapidity of its operations and the satisfactory nature of the results achieved, the most efficient motive power yet discovered.

An Electric Exhibition is by no means a new thing. Since the first one in 1881, there have been at least half-a-dozen. But every year there is more to

exhibit ; fresh questions are daily asking for fresh answers ; old problems are finding new solutions ; so that the International Electrotechnical Exhibition which was opened at Frankfurt-on-the-Main a few weeks ago, is far more comprehensive than any of its predecessors, and also of far wider interest to the commercial world on the one hand, and to men of science on the other.

The idea of such an Exhibition was set on foot during the year of the great French Exhibition—1889. At that time the town of Frankfurt was busy with a scheme for establishing a central electric station, which should provide not only public and private lighting, but also motive power to all factories or mechanics who would put themselves in communication with it. In order to carry out this scheme in the best possible way, a committee of experts was appointed to examine, test, and report upon the machinery necessary to the undertaking ; to find out, in fact, and recommend the best and most suitable steam-engines and dynamos. As the scheme was intended to cover a great deal of ground, the committee of experts found their task a long and difficult one. After much investigation and many consultations, a verdict was at length given, and at the same time it was proposed that in order to obviate similar difficulties in parallel cases, it would be well to invite all the leading manufacturers of electric machinery to join in a great International Electrotechnical Exhibition to be held at Frankfurt. The proposal was evidently a timely one. It met with unanimous approval from those to whom it was addressed. In a few weeks preparations were seriously set on foot, and funds were rapidly subscribed. It was at first proposed to hold the Exhibition in 1890, but that would have allowed too little time for the indispensable preparations. Finally 1891 was decided on.

The Exhibition buildings occupy what was, a few months ago, a dreary waste of building ground, more than twenty acres in extent, between the central railway station and the town. They include, as a matter of course, many besides those required by the exhibitors. There are : a gigantic panorama, a dozen restaurants, a theatre, and various other seductions for the frivolous ; but one and all the structures are tastefully designed, and well carried out ; and when the enthusiastic Frankfurter boldly draws a comparison between the

Electric Exhibition buildings and those which adorned the Champ de Mars in '89, after duly discounting the patriotism which inspired the assertion, we can still admit a certain residue of truth. The great machine hall in particular is a handsome building, and when the outline of its cupola and towers is traced out against the evening sky by two thousand incandescent lamps of various colours, the effect is quite fairy-like, and far from suggesting anything so heavy and prosy as machinery and manufacture.

We are not long in remarking that this is an industrial Exhibition in the most literal sense of the word ; every lamp-post has a placard affixed, saying the firm from which it originated ; every lamp bears the name of its maker in black and white ; the clock holds out its certificate of birth, and the wire railings round the lawns tell you where their like is to be had. It is evidently — in spite of the gay-looking restaurants, very much in earnest, and if we want to see it we must go seriously to work, the restaurants and frivolities can come later, when mind and body want refreshment. With this plan of campaign we make our way across the grounds to the boiler-house, which lies immediately behind the great machine hall. We intend to begin at the beginning, and work our way steadily through.

The very beginning and root of the matter is a great pumping-engine down by the river, itself worked by two electro-motors, which supplies the boilers. This much, however, we take on trust, and take our start among the boilers themselves. The first impression conveyed to the non-professional, as he or she enters the long unpretentious building, is one of heat and prevalent Brunswick black. We accustom ourselves to this as we walk along the gallery in front of the boilers, pausing in amazement at the size and curious appearance of one after another. There are vertical boilers and horizontal boilers, there are boilers which are embedded in solid masonry, and boilers which display their colossal forms to the public. There are communicative boilers which tell you how much heating surface they contain, or how many atmospheres they can support to the square inch, and there are reserved boilers which set you longing for an explanation if you only had the boldness to attract the attention of one of the busy workmen. We bring our courage to the sticking point at last, and satisfy our

curiosity from the information of an obliging foreman. There are, he tells us, twenty-two boilers erected, nineteen of which are at work. This represents a heating surface of two thousand five hundred and ninety-five square metres. The improvements which electric engineering has brought about in the construction of boilers are, we learn, many and great. Steam must above all be produced rapidly; furthermore, it is necessary to economise coal, and to minimise smoke. Hence these assemblages of pipes under the boilers, through which the water gradually passes. Naturally, with the increase of steam-power, danger increases; but modern science nips it in the bud. If we may implicitly believe all that we heard in the boiler-house at the Frankfurt Exhibition, a boiler can only burst nowadays from a wilful desire to behave in an unexpected manner.

The steam which is being generated so rapidly, and in such enormous quantities, finds its way by pipes to the central machine hall. Thither we follow it, curious to see what part is allotted to it in the great drama of which electricity is hero and heroine. We are so fortunate as to meet here a professional friend who kindly places his technical knowledge at our disposal, and who explains to us, with the ease of long acquaintance, the mysteries of dynamos, and how they are driven. He first calls our attention to the fact that every dynamo—or electricity-producing machine—however large, however small, must be driven by another engine, generally a steam-engine. The two stand side by side, a strap connecting them. The requirements of the dynamo have brought even greater improvements into existence in the steam-engine than in the boiler. The very straps which pass from wheel to wheel have joined in the march of progress, while the registers of force and speed have outstripped their predecessors of ten years ago by an incalculable distance. Our friend tells us that the fly-wheel of the huge machine, in front of which he has called a halt, is capable of performing one hundred and sixty revolutions in a minute, and that it is going at nearly full speed. Of course we believe him—we see a great whirling circle the centre of which appears to be made of gleaming gauze—how can he know, we ask, whether or no it could go a little faster. He points to an object which looks like an aneroid, but which is labelled "Tachometer," and of which the long

finger is trembling over the figure one hundred and forty, sometimes advancing a little, sometimes retreating. This is the answer to our question. We further learn that the steadiness of the index on the tachometer is a test of the accuracy of a wheel's build. But this must not keep us from the more important subject of the dynamo. It is but very few of those who come to look at this heavy mass at work, continues our guide, who have any idea where and how the electric force is generated. We have, ourselves, a vague notion, based on our childish experiments with the back of the "harmless necessary cat." At this he laughs good-naturedly. The sparks we refer to are not created, but only rendered visible, by our friction, he says; and then he shows us the part of a dynamo which corresponds to the cat's back. It is a great copper axis, which is traversed horizontally by hundreds of lines, and which projects and revolves beyond the body of the machine. Round it and in extremely delicate contact with it, are several sets of things which look like square-ended knife blades, woven of fine copper wire. If the hall were dark we should see occasional electric flashes between this revolving body, and these copper scrapers. The less delicate the contact the more sparks are seen. The copper surface is, in fact, alive with an electric current strong enough to kill us all if we were ill-advised enough to touch it with the extreme tip of our fingers; but the current is not created there, it is only collected, and carried straight away. He then takes us to a dynamo which is at rest, and consequently easier to examine. Here he shows us that part of the wheel which answers to the tire. It consists of a number of coils of wire; each of which has two ends communicating with the collector. As the wheel revolves, each coil in turn passes close to an electro-magnet which is always kept charged. There is no contact, no friction, yet each coil of wire in turn—and its turn comes, perhaps, three hundred times in a minute—is instantly charged with electricity, which it forthwith hands on to the collector. The transmission of the current from the magnet to the coil, says our friend, is the secret of nature; the natural philosopher has taken hold of it, the electric engineer has applied it, but neither of them can explain it.

Now we are further instructed in the way in which electricity, as it leaves its cradle, is measured. On each dynamo

we see a plate, which tells us that the machine can produce so many volts, so many ampères. These words to us suggest nothing. They were certainly not in the table-book of our childhood. "Volt," we are told, represents the "spannung" (tension) of the current; "ampère" the impact it acquires. The number of volts a machine gives depends, as we understand it, on the amount of electricity it is capable of producing, the number of ampères on the efficiency of the conducting-wire, and the comparative absence of friction. A third measure, "watt," which is the number of volts multiplied by the ampères, gives us the working force of the machine—its horse-power, so to speak.

The force, whose production we have been looking at, is distributed by an intricate maze of telegraph-wires all over the Exhibition—for lights inside and out, to the workshops, to the signalling, telegraphic and telephonic systems, to the various electric tram-lines, to the artificial mine, to the electric-boats on the Main, to the big pump which feeds the boilers, to the monster captive balloon. You may command its services by "dropping a penny in the slot" of several of those machines so long associated in the public mind with chocolate and cigars. At one of these machines you can get a slight electric shock; at another you hear for a minute the performance of a musical instrument out of a phonograph; a third puts you in telephonic communication with the Exhibition officials. There is altogether, we are told, a force in activity which may be represented by four thousand seven hundred horse-power.

This mass, however, is not all produced on the premises. To show off adequately the possibilities of a force which can fly ten times round the world in a second, one of the most important points to illustrate is that the force does not degenerate by transmission; that, in fact, an electro-motor may receive its current from a dynamo at any distance. The committee have, therefore, placed three of their dynamos at the Palmengarten, a mile and a half from the Exhibition, another at Offenbach, five miles up the river, while a third enormous stream of twenty-five thousand volts—an ordinary "Güh" lamp requires only one hundred volts—is brought from a dynamo worked by water-power at Lauffen, on the Neckar, a distance of more than one hundred and twenty miles.

This is considered the crowning victory of the Exhibition.

Our guide then led us to the Installation Hall, that we might see the various matters and articles, instruments, and tools required by the electrician for his work. We saw stacks of bamboo-charcoal, coils of wire, gutta-percha, resin, asbestos, all the sundry and manifold parts of electric-bells, electric-telegraphs, electric-lamps—of which there were dozens burning in tasty globes of all colours—there were conductors and isolators of all sorts. None of them interested us very much, though the whole impressed us with the notion that electricity must give a wonderful impetus to an incredible number of industries, and must therefore be a great joy to the earnest political economist.

Before we enter the next department we take a long look at its exterior, which, together with one end of the boiler-house, is built to represent old Frankfurt—the Frankfurt where Faust set up his stolen printing-press; where Shylock bought the ring Jessica stole; where Goethe passed his childhood; and where the Rothschilds laid the foundation-stone of their colossal fortunes. The slated fronts of the houses, the high peaked gables, the narrow windows, the quaint turrets—above all, a reproduction of the ancient Holzpförtchen, with its battlements and portcullis, bring Auld Lang Syne into sharp contrast with the van of progress. There are a few of these picturesque corners still to be found in the older streets of Frankfurt; but they are fast disappearing. Something, naturally, must cede its place to electricity.

The interior of the building is as interesting as the exterior. It exhibits such instruments as are required for the vertheilung (distribution) of electricity. The first thing our guide called on us to admire was a transformator, which he told us was at work.

"At work!" we exclaimed, peering through the wire-netting which protected it. "Why, it is not only silent, but quite motionless!"

"But do we not feel the heat?" asks our friend.

Yes, it is true; a stream of hot air hovers over the netting. What work is it carrying on? It is transforming the current of a stream of electricity, we learn—exchanging so many volts into so many ampères, or vice versa, just as it is required; a most modest machine, we con-

sidered, to effect such a marvel with so little self-assertion.

Further on we saw a splendid display of specimens of submarine telegraphic cables, each set labelled with the places it connects, its length, and the date of its laying. These are exhibited by Messrs. Siemens of London, together with the model of a ship which was used in laying a Transatlantic cable.

Flanking this Vertheilungs Hall are two rows of workshops, in which electromotors replace the old motive forces—steam or hand. All the electricity is supplied from the dynamo, whose gyrations we were studying only an hour ago. The electromotor is a most unpretending-looking machine. The only moveable part of it is a spindle, which revolves between two uprights. There is no driver necessary—nothing but an occasional dose of machine oil; it is perfectly noiseless, and gives out no heat. The workman presses his foot on a treadle, or pushes back a button, and his machine or instrument, however big, however delicate, is set in motion.

There were needles being made; there were sewing-machines doing all manner of work; there was a big crane lifting heavy weights; and an optician polishing lenses; there was an electric dairy, and an electric laundry; a sawyer sawing planks, and a watchmaker at his lathe. In fact, there were more machines than we can possibly remember, working with a maximum of precision and a minimum of noise.

Among so much sightseeing it was natural that we should require an interval for refreshment and rest. But where to seek it. The choice is so embarrassing. There is an American bar, with drinks of wondrous nomenclature; there is a picturesque imitation of a Magyar country inn, where Hungarian wine can be drunk; there is a kiosk devoted to Californian vintages; there is a fine building to represent an Italian tower, where the grape of the Fatherland can be enjoyed; there is a Bavarian beer-hall, and a rival establishment from Pfungstadt. Our friend shakes his head at each of these in succession.

"We want something cooler and more refreshing," he says, "than anything these supply. Have we," he asks, "ever tasted Sachsenhäuser cider?"

"No," we reply, "we have never even heard of it."

This seems to him a terrible gap in our culture. Never heard of Sachsenhäuser cider! Why, its name and fame were

good a century ago. Frankfurt and the neighbourhood grow enormous quantities of apples; many of these are carried to Sachsenhäuser, on the opposite bank of the Main, to be there pressed and converted into cider. One firm alone uses annually more than forty-five thousand hundredweight of fruit, and produces upwards of a million-and-a-half litres. As he tells us this he leads us to a pretty little building in the style of a Sachsenhäuser garden-house. A wreath of fir with an apple in the middle, which hangs over the door, suggests what we shall find inside. The interior is a good imitation of an old-fashioned German inn. The walls are decorated with humorous sketches; the chairs and tables are such as Frosch and his jolly companions were familiar with in Auerbach's Keller in Leipzig, when Mephistopheles and Faust came and disturbed the serenity of the social gathering.

There is an old-world feeling about the whole thing. It seems quite an anachronism to look up and see electric lamps ready to give us light when the twilight comes on. The cider is really good; our electrician has made wiser and gladder folk of us.

Our next move is to the department for telegraphy and telephony. Here there is an extremely good and comprehensive display. The Imperial Post and the Royal Bavarian Post exhibit machinery which follows out the whole history of the telegraphic system; so does the Eastern Telegraph Company (English). In the last-named collection we saw a model of Sir William Thomson's electro-magnetic siphon-recorder in its original form, and standing face to face with it the same machine in its present perfection. We also passed a most instructive quarter of an hour in front of a telephone station, such as would be used in a large town.

In this department, for a small entrance fee, can be seen and heard the phonograph, the gramophone, and an operatic performance brought by telephone from Munich. There are two Edison phonographs for the entertainment of the enquiring mind: one repeats a speech made by an Englishman in German, reproducing with comic fidelity the well-known British accent; the other grinds out a short musical piece. This we found much more curious than edifying.

We then proceeded to assist for ten minutes at a performance of "Tannhäuser," which had just commenced in the

Opera House at Munich. When our turn came to place the telephone to our ear, the overture was drawing to a close. The effect of what Mark Twain is pleased to call a musical insurrection, heard by electricity, is very strange. The combined instruments seemed to lose their balance en route. The horns and trumpets exerted themselves amazingly, and the strings, which play so important a part in the aforesaid overture, were almost inaudible. When the first scene opened, however, one had no more fault to find. The voice of the tenor, Vogl, one of the greatest Wagner singers in Germany, came to us as clear and pure as if we had been sitting in the balcony facing the stage. We could almost see him pleading with the enchantress Venus for his release from his unhallowed sojourn ; but, alas ! it was an enjoyment all too short. The conductor turned the inexorable handle, the voices trembled into silence, and Munich was once more removed to a distance of one hundred and seventy miles.

We then went into the hall devoted to the use of electricity in connection with railways. Here, as in the telegraphy department, the State has done much for the Exhibition. The railway directorate of Frankfurt exhibits in miniature the whole of its original system, historically. The models look like the most enchanting toys. Our guide, who is quite at home among them, with the kind assistance of an official, shows and explains the whole to us. He runs a miniature train through a network of miniature lines, stopping it when the signals are against it, and finally brings it safe into port. He shows a clock, which has an automatic electric connection with the points, and registers the exact moment of the train's passage. What an unimpeachable witness against a negligent or reckless engine-driver !

We also saw an automatic machine for displaying in the waiting-room the names of the places for which trains are about to start. We uttered a devout hope that the clever invention might be universally adopted — at least in Germany — to the abolition of the rapid and unintelligible official who performs the function at present, and who has caused us many a moment of panic.

There was also an automatic machine for registering, in the station-master's office, the speed of a train at the moment it passes over a certain spot of the rails.

The name of this machine is worth recording. The author of the "Tramp Abroad" would certainly add it to his collection of uniques if he came across it. It is "Zug geschwindigkeit registrir appare."

But the most interesting machine of all was one whose outward appearance is far behind its historic importance. This is the first electric locomotive ever constructed. Above it hangs the portrait of the engineer whose work it is — Werner von Siemens, the head of the great firm of electricians at Berlin. It is a small, low, wooden construction, it was worked by an accumulator inside, and a driver sitting astride the top, which caused much merriment in the Berlin Exhibition of 1879.

After a long look at this interesting relic we leave the hall, hesitating, as we go, in a choice between two voyages of discovery : one into the artificial mine, where every detail of work is carried on by the help of electricity ; the other into the air by means of the captive balloon. The question decides itself, for the entrance to the mine — so little like the pit mouth of real life — is closed ; so we cross the Kaiser Strasse to the space set apart for Captain Rodeck's monster aerostat. While it is being prepared for the ascent, we gather some details concerning its build and working. It is the largest, it appears, that has yet made an ascent in Germany. Its captain and crew, sixteen in number, are all gallant tars, and display the usual naval briskness and smartness. The envelope consists of nine thicknesses of a material woven of wool and silk. It kept forty sewing-machines at work for six weeks, and used thirty pounds' worth of thread in its making, besides breaking four pounds' worth of needles. The cable which holds it to terra-firma is six hundred and fifty yards long, and is paid out by an electric machine. It will stand a strain of twenty-eight thousand pounds. Nevertheless, in one of its first flights it managed to escape from its moorings, and took the one passenger it contained at the moment for a fairly long trip. This casualty, however, is not likely to recur. We mount the natty ladder into the car with great confidence, and at a word from the captain the enormous wheel which controls our flight is in slow, steady motion. As we gently mount, the Exhibition buildings lie beneath us, as neat and trim as an architect's plan, and the notes of the band come up softly through the evening air. The sun has set, and the sky is cloudless

and clear. When we have reached the level of the highest tower of the city, we come to a halt ; below us lies Frankfurt, well-favoured, well-situated, a vast sea of houses, girdled round by the broad, green Anlagen. There is the Main with its busy quays, and the enormous Central Railway Station—a train gliding along the rails looks like a tiny snake. Then we go on upwards. The surrounding chains of hills, the Spessart, the Odenwald, even the Schwarzwald come into sight, while the Taunus hills, beloved of the Frankfurt excursionist, are so near and clear that we feel as if we could touch them. A little higher and we see a still more beautiful sight—another glimpse of the sun, already set for Frankfurt, behind the Feldberg.

It was well worth making the ascent to see the wonderful contrast between the already darkening plain below and the bright glow beyond the hills.

But the rope is paid out ; before it has begun to be wound up the sun has disappeared once more. Then comes the crowning sensation. The light of the great reflector-lamp on the upper deck of the balloon—where Captain Rodeck and his officers manipulate the ascent—is turned on. The silvery ray falls far across space on to an old ruined castle in the wooded hills. Every stone is as clear as if we were within a stone's throw of it. Another minute, and the light has changed its direction ; it touches the rich red tower of Frankfurt Cathedral ; then, as we sink, the dazzling flood streams on to the colossal railway-station.

"The romance is over," we exclaim.

"That depends," rejoins our professional friend, "on the point of view from which we see things."

For him, he maintains, no romance is so thrilling as the story of the struggle between mind and matter, of the slowly-gained victories of genius and perseverance over time and space. He is waxing eloquent, when, lo ! he is interrupted by a slight concussion, as when a train suddenly stops.

"Ladies and gentlemen," says the aéronaut, "I hope you are pleased with our excursion."

We assure him that we are ; and well satisfied with our day's achievements, though we have left much unseen, we take our way back to our hotel. It is no wonder if that night, in our dreams, we return on electric wings, without the least exertion on our own part, to our native

land, conversing as we journey, through silvery-toned telephones, with our absent friends of all the wonders we have seen at the International Electric Exhibition.

SUNDAY IN HOSPITAL.

A HOT, breathless Sunday afternoon, with no shady sides to the streets, and arid stretches of burning pavement to cross ; more oppressively hot from the people who are strolling along in their Sunday finery, or crowding the omnibuses and cars that, with three or four horses apiece, are making for some place of holiday resort. It is hot enough, too, by the hospital gates, where a crowd of people have gathered, awaiting the striking of the hour which will admit them to the interior of the building. Within, the expectation is perhaps even more intense. It is a good thing to be an in-patient in one of our magnificent hospitals. Many people, children especially, could never have imagined that such care and kindness as meet them in the hospital were ever to be exercised in their behalf, while the comforts of cleanliness and order, and the happiness of regular and sufficient food, are some counterpoise for the uneasiness and suffering of their condition.

"Such a 'Evnly place,'" says Maggy, in "Little Dorrit." And how many children from unkind, unhappy homes would say the like ? Yet whatever the home may be, an affection for it survives a good deal of rough usage ; and in the quiet, unvaried routine of hospital life, a visit from one's own friends brings in a bit of the variety and charm of the outer world.

If the patients inside, and their friends outside the hospital, feel an eager kind of interest in the coming meeting, the nurses have also their preoccupations. That the wards shall look cheerful and pleasant is in the general order of things ; but extra touches here and there, a rearrangement of flowers and shrubs, and a general brushing and brightening up, give witness to the desire that everything shall be seen to the best advantage.

The crush in the doorway suggests the passage to the galleries "at the play" ; but there are stronger shades of character here, and more striking contrasts in appearance. Here stands a stout, brawny woman, in the coarse dress and apron of everyday wear. She has come to see her Bill, who cut his own throat last night, but was

luckily too drunk to cut it very deep. And there are half-a-dozen specimens of the ordinary British matron and mother, such as this one with the red, smeary face, and dull, fish-like eyes. Two of her boys are in a home, and her gal is in the 'spital. At both places "they look after 'em fine," she informs a friend and neighbour; and she abandons her responsibilities to the good gentlemen and others with the lightest heart imaginable. Her friend and neighbour is younger and fiercer-looking, a hard worker, and not a mere drifter among public-houses. She has come to see her father, who was took bad with the horrors.

"Oh, they treat 'em well enough," she admits; "but they don't get their little comforts, neither."

Polly means to supply one little comfort to her respected parent, anyhow, and laughs and smacks the bottle in her pocket. There is a comradeship about this young woman that has its engaging side, although it is too evident that it leads to her partaking of, as well as dispensing, comforts of the kind contained in her black bottle.

Yet there are pleasant family groups, too, by the dozen. The young wife with her baby, whose elaborate costume—the baby's, not the wife's—suggests the care bestowed upon the first-born; the three or four motherless children in black, yet not quite motherless with that clever little chit at the head of them, all come to see father who has tumbled off a scaffold and broke his leg. Then there are three or four boys under the guidance of a father who looks distracted enough, poor fellow, with sadness lurking in his eyes, and sorrow in the corners of his mouth. Many of the young people bring flowers—flowers of the market, not of the garden, though here is a rosy-looking countryman, who brings as an offering a spreading fern in a big pot, while another carries, not a palm-branch, but a whole tree on a small scale. And these will be as gladly received as the offerings of the magi, and will hold places of honour in the decorations of the ward for months, and perhaps years to come.

But now the doors, the great entrance doors, are thrown open, and we are borne onward in the crowd. Surely the greatest man in a hospital, not excepting the visiting physician or the treasurer, is the hall porter, that is, if he be fully equal to his position. Affable to the authorities, polite but dignified with the nurses,

friendly with the patients. Condescending to their friends, but with a keen eye, notwithstanding—"Now, Polly, what have you got there in your pocket? turn it out," and the black bottle is confiscated. But Polly gives a nudge to her friend. She always carries two, and the forfeited one was cold tea; no harm in cold tea, if not strictly in accordance with regulations. But the porter's eyes can't be everywhere, and a good many forbidden dainties are smuggled in by visitors who can't believe that this or the other should do any harm to anybody.

Who does not know the interior of a hospital? The board-room, where the governors sit in state, or the medical officers meet in council, and where at other times students entertain their friends, or in moments of expansion play leap-frog over chairs and tables; the dispensary, crowded with drugs and bottles; the accident ward, where sufferers may arrive at any moment from the streets; the theatre, with the operating-table displayed in the centre, a place familiarly known in hospital language as the slaughter-house. Then there is the general perfume of carbolic acid, suggestive of surgical knives and bandages; the wide, open staircases, the cheerful roomy wards.

Here is the surgical ward of which we are in search—the beds ranged round three sides of the room, a stained-glass screen running down the middle, with cots for children on either side; growing plants and ferns give a cheerful appearance to the long room, and prints and chromos on the walls have the same effect in the general estimation. Over each bed is the tablet which records the name and number of the patient, and the name of the surgeon who has the case in hand, with the dietary table, and perhaps a brief diagnosis of the case, which, if it be complicated, the patient regards with considerable pride. A small low press holds the patient's personal belongings and such small rations as sugar and butter, which, sometimes, friends from outside are allowed to furnish. Over each bed swings from the roof a chain, furnished with a miniature trapeze, by which the sufferer may help to move himself in bed. Here and there a screen placed round a bed indicates that a patient is passing away beyond the reach of human aid, or that he may be wandering among delirious fancies.

And now, about nearly all the beds, there gathers a little levée of visitors. But,

if any be so unlucky as to have no friends who care to come and see him, he need not feel himself deserted, for there is plenty of comradeship among the patients; they know each other's cases, and Harry's friends come and talk to William, and everybody is friendly enough, without waiting for introductions. And there are the nosegays which are entrusted to the nurses to put into water after the sick children have inhaled the freshness of their fragrance. The children are never left uncared for—the whole ward takes an interest in their welfare, and kind ministering women come and sit by those who have no mothers to care for them, or, perhaps, worse than none.

But here is one who is going away. That fracture of his has been reduced, and he hobbles about famously with the aid of a stick. In workaday hours he is a young man who drives a van; and as pleasant and friendly a young fellow as you could wish to see. He hobbles round to all the beds to shake hands with the inmates. The children nod and smile at him as he passes, and watch him as he passes out, and leans on the arm of the little wife, while "the kid" marches joyously in front. And then he pauses to say "good-bye" to the ward nurse, who sits in her little room marking off her dockets. "Good-bye," a little huskily, for, as he says, "you have all been jolly good to me." And then he, too, is marked off, discharged—cured, and a nurse takes down the record from over the vacant bed. Already, perhaps, a tenant for the vacant bed is being borne out of the crush and turmoil of the street, the roar of whose traffic is gently heard through the open windows of the quiet ward.

Further on is a sailor, a young mate, who fell down the hold while discharging cargo, a frank, good-looking young fellow, who would be a credit to the Royal Navy. It was for him, lucky dog, in spite of his misfortune, that the pretty young wife with the finely-dressed baby was waiting down below, and there is a shipmate, too, to hail him, as to having had his timbers comfortably spliced.

Beyond the sailor lies an older man, and one whose face is worn by pain. He is awaiting a dangerous operation, which affords the one slight chance of preserving him in life. But that one little chink of hope sustains him wonderfully, and he, too, can be cheerful with his friends in this holiday hour.

But there are only sixty minutes in the hour, however precious those minutes may be. A subdued whistle sounds along the wards, and is repeated in the corridors. The good ship sails on her regular course once more, and all visitors and idlers must "come ashore." And we may hope that those on board of her may come ashore, too, in good time, out into the pleasant sunshine, and into the bustling world, where health and strength are such joyous, precious gifts; and so be written down in the books—"discharged, cured."

A GARRISON ROMANCE.

BY MRS. LEITH ADAMS (Mrs. LAFFAN).
Author of "Louis Draycott," "Geoffrey Stirling," "Aunt Hepzibah's Foundling," etc.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE six days which were to elapse before the dual tyrants—business and Dodson—should claim Mr. Jones, were nearly at an end. The ship-owner's passage was secured, his affairs in the island were wound up. Endless were the P.P.C. calls he had to make, so many friends had his genial simplicity, his unpretending worth, won for him. Michael was inconsolable, and informed every one that his "heart within him was plenty, plenty sad."

"Sare Jones, he has the fat heart and the wide hand. He is the best-as-made; he is, as we say in Engleesh—a rare'un, good to go. I weep for him," said Michael.

And, indeed, Mabel's lover—he was that still, he was always that—made himself very dear to all who knew him in these last days. For you and I, dear reader, know well that they are last days, indeed; know very well that by some chance, happy or not, who can say? Amphlett Jones overheard the latter part of that sad and pitiful farewell in the floral tent; know, perhaps, more than we care to know, what the hearing of it meant to him. Not a look, not a word betrayed the secret in his breast; not a look, not a sigh betrayed the aching at his heart. With such a nobility about him altogether as would only have been called into life by the noble soul that dwelt within, the man lived through each of those long days, loving and loved by all the little band around him. His noble heart was like a light shining through a homely lantern, and making it beautiful and bright—bright with the subdued and steady radiance that

is only to be found in a perfect self-abnegation. In the light of a day to come, all this was read as the writing in letters of fire on the wall of old ; but at the time, this time, all eyes were blind, all senses dull ; only the hearts were open wide.

The man's resolution and endurance were wonderful. The manner in which he kept the even tenor of his way, marvellous.

Everything was arranged entirely to the Major's satisfaction. He—the Major—was to obtain leave, when the C. O. and Sir Peyton rejoined ; there would be no difficulty then. The marriage was to take place in England. Retirement was hinted at for "Pap" ; there was to be an end of unlimited scope for the boys ; Lily was to go to Brussels to "finish."

All went as merry as a marriage bell, or, rather, many bells. No one looked sad save the bride-elect's mother and—occasionally—the Honourable Bob and Ginger ; also Dr. Musters had a grave face on him as he listened to Mabel's laugh and noted the dark shadows round her eyes—the signs of sleepless nights and troubled thoughts.

Like the condemned man, who finds each day of the short time left to him more precious than the last, Mr. Jones counted the days, nay, the hours, that lay between the precious present and the long farewell, that none but himself would know to be supreme and final.

The day before his departure he had a busy time of it. Michael was maddened, or, rather, his curiosity was enraged by the visit—the long visit—of an English lawyer to the hotel. There were papers written, and carried away in a bag. Not one left lying about—not a line, not a sign ! Then came Vernon Halkett, a man not much more than indicated in this story, but of whom we may hear more in another—a man to whom all the trust of Mr. Jones had gone out, though he had not seen much of him.

"I know not what things are doing with themselves," said Michael. "It is to give one the madness of the dogs ; it is to make one run about and tear one's own self. The green doctor he come, he stay ; when he go, he is white as the sheets of the dead. When I go in—I go in plenty quick—Sare Jones is laid out straight—so—the head very much on the arms, the face nowhere seen. Then he gets himself up, and goes out, and I see him no more."

The next day was the last. Late that

night the steamer would be in. All the boxes were packed ; together with all the pretty things that Mr. Jones had bought in Malta—Dodson was not forgotten, you may be sure.

Many of the light-textured garments that had roused Michael to a frenzy of covetousness were now in his possession. He dreamed dreams, and saw visions of himself in those garments, ogling all the girls at Mass and at Benediction. He crossed himself in anticipatory absolution of the sad dog he was going to be, and the hearts he was going to break.

Mr. Jones was pale with a sort of dusky pallor ; he looked shrunken in his clothes ; but he was as calm and gentle as ever. He sent half the toy-shop in the Strada Reale to the "scramble," and the noise of trumpets and shawms and the beating of mimic drums was terrible—so much so, that the Major chid little Phil for "setting up such a din," upon which King Baby behaved in a terrible manner, and gave his family fits. He laid down his instrument of torture—a brazen trumpet with a curl in it, laid himself down beside it, and said :

"Benny wen, I be's goin' not to play no more, 'cos Pap doesn't like mine moosic."

At which Pap had to capitulate at once, and join his entreaties to those of the rest of the family, that more melody should instantly be performed—in fact, sue for a trumpet obligato, which Phil obligingly gave.

In times of great mental strain, it is the little things which run most near to breaking us down. This Amphlett Jones was to learn the truth of.

Just as he was preparing to go across to Sleima for his farewell visit, Michael burst into the room.

"One soldier and one beast to see Sare Jones—one great John bull-dog—big—so," and Michael indicated an impossible monster.

"I will come down," said Mr. Jones, slipping a sovereign into his waistcoat pocket. "I will be there in a moment."

In the wide entrance-hall he found Sir Peyton's servant, otherwise Private Davenport, apparently gone suddenly rigid from head to foot, without a bend in him, and as it seemed, gazing fixedly into space—this being his idea of proper respect due to a civilian and gentleman of distinction.

"Heard you was a-going, sir," said Davenport ; "thought you'd like to see the dawg. He's pretty middling in 'ealth

and appetite, is Butcher. I thank you, sir, but he stands in need of a deal of encouragement."

Butcher, whom Michael was viewing from the safe elevation of halfway up the stairs, raised his huge muzzle and gave a languid wag of his stumpy tail, as who should say : "I'm a very sad dog without my master, I do assure you — pray encourage me if you can."

"Tell your master I was very glad to see Butcher," said Mr. Jones.

"I shall tell Captain Sir Peyton Paling as you was very pleased to see the dawg," said Davenport, with his hand glued to the side of his cap. "Come on, Butcher."

But Butcher lingered, looking up in the face of the stranger—

It was only a little thing, this interview with poor old Butcher, but it upset Mr. Jones past the telling. It seemed the one added straw that went near to break the back of his endurance. He would like to have kissed the old dog's bullet head. He actually saw the brindled, wrinkled forehead through a sheen of tears. . . .

It is next day.

Amphlett Jones is gone ; and people go about saying how much they miss him. They hardly knew how much he did to strive and make every one happy until he was gone, and there was no one else to do it any more.

Mabel is kneeling at her mother's knee.

"Mother," she says, "when he took me in his arms last night, as gently as if I were a baby, when he reminded me—alwaysasgently—that he had not yet kissed me, though I was his promised wife; when he touched my forehead with his lips, and held me so a moment, when he said : 'Heaven bless you—my dear—' I felt that if—if it hadn't been for—if things had been different—I could have learnt to love him, in time—yes, to love him with all my grateful heart—to love him as he should be loved. I tried to tell him so; but he would not let me. If he had known all about everything, he could not have been more tender—or more dear and fond. I was very silly, and burst out crying. He took his handkerchief, and wiped the tears from my eyes : 'Nay,' he said, 'do not let me see you weep—I cannot bear to see you weep. I like to think of you smiling and happy. Heaven send you may be both, my darling—' He never called me that before; he looked

so sad that I could not choose but say something kind to him—he has been so good—so good. When he said : 'Good-bye,' I said : 'It will not be for long—' 'No,' he said, 'not for long—not for long—nothing is long in this world—though it seems so—' Then he put me from him, in the same gentle way, and left me—without another word. . . ."

Then the two women clasped and kissed, and each knew all that was in the other's heart—the pity of it, the sadness of it, the glory of it.

The world is some weeks older, when, one day, Jim sits flat out on the floor; his legs are extended; his hatchet face is uplifted like a dog about to howl, and the tears course adown his cheeks.

"Heavens, Jim!" cries Mrs. Carbonel, entering from the road, "what has happened? What is the matter with you?"

"Don't speak to me," cries Jim. "I'm not to be spoke to; I'm too sad. Go away; they're all gone upstairs."

"What is it? Oh, Jim, tell me!" pleads Mrs. Carbonel, thoroughly alarmed.

"Mr. Jones is like Corporal Jack—he's drownded dead. Oh, go away, go away!" sobs Jim, this time throwing himself prostrate in one of his agonies.

And she goes.

Something tells her that the news is true, and that little plot of hers takes the form of a treachery to the dead.

Soon she hears all about it—how, in the Bay of Biscay, when a fresh breeze was blowing and a brisk sea running, a passenger was one morning reported missing from the steamer. The rich ship-owner of Lombard Street had disappeared while the shadows of the night touched the white-crested waves and the pitiful moonbeams turned them into silver.

Some thought they heard this, some thought they heard that. People have always heard things, or seen things, when accidents of this kind happen. Was it an accident? Who may say? Did Amphlett Jones lay down his life because he saw no other way; or was it taken from him and did he give it up gladly, finding this world a lonely place, and having perfect faith in that which lies beyond our ken?

Let each one have it his own way. I can but tell things as they happened.

At all events, Vernon Halkett knew that Mr. Jones had resolved to give up all hope

of calling Mabel Graham his wife; but—he knew no more. There are things that must rest between heaven and a man's own soul, and in which no man can meddle; and of these the death of Amphlett Jones was one.

At all events, it may be said that, if love is supreme according as it attains to an absolute abnegation of self, then surely Mr. Jones deserves to be looked upon as the hero of an ineffable and beautiful—romance.

As time went on, those who loved him and mourned him saw all about the "accident" in the papers; heard its story on the tongues of men and women; heard further wonders still, for the English lawyer produced a will, duly signed and sealed, and by this will, after various moneys set aside for this or that noble purpose—after Dodson was well provided for, and the education of Major Clutterbuck's boys arranged for—Amphlett Jones, of Lombard Street, left Mabel Graham, stepdaughter of the above Major Desbrow Clutterbuck, of Her Majesty's 193rd Regiment of Foot, his sole residuary legatee.

A year later the 193rd were still at Malta; but they had got the "route." They were going to the land where the stags ran about the streets, waiting to be shot, and where the snow was ever falling.

Once more the men in scarlet were sitting round the mess-table; once more the band-boys sang, with sweet, shrill voices, the story of the Men of Harlech. The purple sea, the overhanging canopy of star-gemmed sky, the flood of silver moonlight—all are the same as on that night a year ago, when the "Outsider" dined with the 193rd, and Sir Peyton Paling sat in the balcony, with his heels on a chair, and a soda-and-brandy by his side. He is doing exactly the same now. He has got over his disappointment, and is reported to be paying his addresses to a gay widow. Indeed, Ginger and the Honourable Bob have already volunteered to assist him in writing the necessary document.

A guest—a civilian—is speaking, and he addresses the first-named of these worthies:

"You've had some changes in the regiment since I was here last year?"

"Yes," says Ginger. "Clutterbuck has retired; he's an agent for something or other, and I believe doing well."

"And his daughter—stepdaughter, though, wasn't it? A pretty girl, by Jove!"

"Yes, she married Rowan, of the Rifle Brigade. He's left the Service, too. They've a large property to manage. She was an heiress, you know."

"Ah yes, I remember; it was something of a romance, was it not? Left to her by a City man; a bit of an outsider, wasn't he? I remember seeing him."

But here the Honourable Bob interposed:

"If he was an outsider, as you call it," he said, speaking so seriously, that the other looked at him in some amaze, "if he was an outsider, then the world would be all the better for a few more like him, give you my word."

It may be taken for granted that, as the years went on, Jim captained the Winchester Eleven, and saw that Phil fielded properly in the long field. It may be surmised that Bertie, though voted a bit of a "sap," won the respect of all with whom he came in contact, and that Algé looked to him for protection in all schoolboy troubles, and never looked in vain.

We may think of Mabel as a very happy woman, with a husband who is still a lover, and children about her knee; children who remind her of the "scramble" of old days, but are not allowed quite so much "scope" as were that unruly band; children to whom she tells the story of little Pail climbing on the turret, and how he was saved—a story that never loses its charm, and has to be told over and over again.

There is another story, too, which she tells them. It is called "The Story of a Good Man's Life"—how he was very, very rich, and tried to help everybody, and to make them happy, and never thought about himself at all. The tears come into mother's eyes as she tells that story—the story they love best of all.

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